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Leadership and the Management of Project Risk, Quality and People: Case Study of Sammya Nigeria Limited

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Abstract

This study examined leadership and management of project risk, project quality, and project people, using the case study of the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun Road project by Sammya Nigeria Limited in Osun State, Nigeria. Planning is the core of management, as stated in the well-known Benjamin Franklin adage, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." Planning must thus be done to have effective management. Leadership in project construction is essential since human endeavors play a vital role in all construction departments. Sammya Nigeria Ltd specializes in both civil engineering and property development and was founded in 1993. It has been providing a range of construction services. The study found that Sammya Nigeria Limited, in particular, does not always benefit from one specific leadership style. Although no one leadership style has the power to affect team performance significantly, transformational leaders show that they have faith in their followers' abilities by giving them chances to have a significant impact on their work, which may result in increased productivity, extra work, and satisfaction. The skill and experience of the site staff, the base thickness, the asphalt mix, the wearing course thickness, and the quality of the materials on site are the most critical factors that can affect the quality of a project or engineering activity in Sammya Nigeria Limited. Project managers must always remain on the job site to supervise the site workers on every aspect of the work until the end of working hours.

Keywords: Leadership, Management, Project people, Project quality, Project risk.

1 | Introduction

Project management is the application of skills, knowledge, methodologies, techniques and tools towards the realization of outlined project objectives. It contains five major process groups as initiating, planning, execution, controlling and closing [1]. Modern organizations are using program and portfolio management

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for project management. The relationships between projects, program, and portfolio management help to present how organizational goals and strategies are connected to the individual projects [1]. If an activity is being planned on an organizational level, it affects the projects based on the pertinence of the project for the organization, cost, and future objectives of the project. Alternatively, it also determines the organizational support for different projects based on risks, benefits, resources, short-term and long-term goals [1].

Several authors have defined strategy in different perspectives. De Wit and Meyer [2] define strategy as a course of action for achieving an organization's purpose. Karianne and Muhammad [3] noted that earlier business landscape was simpler and therefore the business strategies could be more complex. Recently, most businesses are more complex, and therefore need to change their strategies accordingly. Instead of tightly linked systems or leverage core competencies, the strategy could shape the processes by simple rules and focus on key strategic processes to gain long-term competitive advantage [4]. Varadarajan and Clark [5], Meskendahn [6] pointed that business strategy is how a company decides to place itself in the market to gain and maintain competitive advantage over its competitors.

Some researchers have recognized that it can be reasonable for organizations to acknowledge the possibilities that lie in functions of strategy more especially with regards to businesses. In the view of Dinsmore and Cooke-Davis [7], projects organizations can accomplish beneficial change and corporate success. All successful projects contribute to beneficial change as a mean of implementing corporate strategy, and to generate more corporate value. Many organizations tend to focus a lot on improving new products, services, or infrastructure [7]. But to manage an organization in turbulent periods, it is crucial to introduce some kind of change [8], [9]. Projects and project success should be a focus of top management since projects are the means by which the organizations accomplish their strategic intent through business change, as well as means by which some organizations deliver profits to their stakeholders.

It is widespread to conduct several projects without any clear link to the strategy or goals of the organization. The aftermath of this can result to irritations, impatience, confusions and a sense of pointlessness amongst the project managers when the selection of projects almost seems random. In a situation where the project managers see a clear link between the selection of projects according to the strategic path, it can help them to understand and recognize the purpose of the project. It thereby can help create an environment for project success [10], [11].

In the view of Dinsmore and Cooke-Davis [7], project people should be quiet about the qualities of project management and focus on strategic delivery capabilities. Even though the project management systems and the project planning are solid, it is always a possibility that the projects can drift away from the corporate strategy. They present three approaches that can help ensure that the projects are aligned with corporate strategy. The first approach is referred to as "stage gates", and is a technique to check the status of the project at every stage gate of the project to see if the project is feasible and aligned with the business strategy.

The second approach is referred to as "heartbeat reviews", which can be used to ensure that the portfolio of projects is aligned with the corporate strategy. Instead of reviewing each project, as in the "stage gate" method, it gives the opportunity to review the overall project portfolio periodically and compare it to the business strategy. The frequency of these reviews depends on the organization and project portfolio. The third approach is the management of the program. This technique is used to direct related projects aimed at definite strategic goals.

Project quality is often based on managerial concepts, which include quality leadership, managing project risk, managing project quality, and managing people. This task delved into project management, quality, and risk associated with people for the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun Road project by Sammya Nigeria Limited in Osun State, Nigeria. Planning is the core of management, as stated in the well-known Benjamin Franklin adage, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." Planning must thus be done to have effective management.

The proper standards of road projects have historically been undercut because of bad leadership, poor risk management, and poor resource (human, material, and financial) allocation [12]. Some of the causes of this

failure, according to Okigbo [13], include subpar road project design and construction, subpar craftsmanship, and subpar construction project supervision. The majority of Nigeria's roads are in bad condition due to inadequate planning before construction, poor oversight brought on by supervisors' compromises or a lack of understanding, and [14]. One measure of management is leadership.

Leadership in project construction is essential since human endeavors play a vital role in all construction departments. This study aims to examine leadership, management of project risk, quality, and people in Sammya Nigeria Limited based on the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun road project that commenced on the 9th January 2013 and was commissioned on the 14th March 2023 in Osun State, Nigeria [15].

2|Overview of Sammya Nigeria Limited

Sammya Nigeria Ltd, a firm that specializes in both civil engineering and property development, was founded in 1993 and has been providing a range of construction services ever since. They work on building roads, bridges, and other engineering infrastructure, as well as developing real estate. On every project they take on, they work to give their customers the best levels of quality, value, and service as one of the largest indigenous construction companies in Nigeria.

Sammya Nigeria Limited is a "brew" of construction knowledge, cutting-edge tools, and qualified labor. Its dedication to providing clients with high-quality project management and performance is ingrained in the company's fundamental principles and has changed the business. Sammya does its operations responsibly, taking into account local communities, the environment, and stakeholders. Sammya has worked on challenging projects for both public and private customers across Nigeria, growing from a modest start-up to a top domestic construction firm.

Sammya has worked with State governments on a Contractor Financing Model, whereby they jointly finance the completion of projects. Among the recent projects is the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun road project that commenced on 9th January, 2013, and was commissioned on 14th March, 2023, in Osun State. Sammya is an active and successful Public Private Partnership (PPP) participant. Their goal is to create long-lasting partnerships with the public sector that provide better value for all parties involved. They research the best financing options that are accessible. Sammya prioritizes developing strong, enduring relationships with its customers.

Key issues in managing people in projects, including leadership and teamwork, and how leadership can be used to improve team performance in Sammya Nigeria Limited on the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun Road.

2.1|Leadership

The act of assisting both individual and group efforts to achieve a common goal is known as leadership [16]. A manager may influence their team members to work voluntarily on what has to be done and what should be done by using leadership [17]. Certain small groups execute jobs that have a significant level of risk; in these situations, team leadership is essential for the capacity to manage the risk [18]. Leadership style has an impact on the composition, efficiency, and productivity of teams [19].

Choi et al. [20] noted that some qualities or behaviours have been used to gauge or evaluate leadership. This was emphasized by Hambley et al. [21]. Other qualities of leaders are tolerance, charisma, inspiration, readiness to accept criticism, team building, and accountability are some of the qualities leaders frequently exhibit [22].

Leadership theories

A shared activity may be accomplished by one person with the help and support of others thanks to the leadership, which is a "process of social influence" [21]. In the end, leadership is about finding a way for individuals to contribute their knowledge and abilities to make something possible and go in the right direction

[9], [23]. Some leadership theories have been established over time to explain what makes a great leader. Among the models are:

Great man theory

One phrase best sums up this theory: "born to lead" [24]. Exceptional leaders are simply endowed from birth with inner qualities such as charisma, self-assurance, intellect, and social skills that enable them to function as natural leaders [18]. According to this notion, great leaders aren't created; they're born. They naturally possess leadership abilities [25].

Trait theory

According to trait theory, successful leadership is characterized by certain personality traits and behavioural patterns [26]. This assumption explained why some individuals make effective leaders and others do not. Impulse, tenacity, energy, high cognitive abilities and the ability to make wise judgments, adaptability, originality, charm, and confidence are some of the key traits outlined in this approach.

Behavioural theory

The study of particular leadership behaviours is a key component of behavioural theories of leadership. The primary distinction between these two beliefs is that qualities cannot be taught to a person. While qualities can evolve through time, they are typically not taught to people; instead, they must be learned independently and allowed to grow. Contrarily, behaviors may be taught [27].

Team performance

Successful teamwork results from some essential traits. Individual activities must first be integrated appropriately by the team. Second, teams must perform in more complex and dynamic contexts [28]. Thirdly, successful team performance is represented by team leadership [23]. Usually, teams include a few key members who are in charge of establishing the team's objectives as well as building and organizing the team to carry out these tasks. Effective teams, according to Zaccaro et al. [18], integrate the four basic processes of cognition, motivation, emotion, and coordination; according to Zaccaro et al. [18], leadership effects on team performance are partly caused by their impacts on these four processes. An essential duty of team leaders is to increase the group's effectiveness.

Team members are more likely to opt to engage in the work if they feel their group is capable of reaching its objectives, or being successful. Leaders who encourage their followers to put in a lot of effort and perform well also increase team efficiency. This relates to how inspiring and transformative leaders empower their followers [29]. Such leaders integrate each member's objectives with the team's or organization's mission through their actions [30]. Team members are more devoted to their success because they identify with the mission and objectives of the group as a whole [31]. As a result, the main goal of transformational leadership is to match each member's motivation with the team's overall goal [31].

Impact of leadership styles on team performance

The leadership performance evaluation that was carried out by Curry [16] found that the roles of subordinates were greater. This style is referred to as transformational leadership style. In the study of Singer [32] among New Zealand workers, it was identified that subordinates prefer to work with transformative than transactional leaders. This is also similar to the study of Kasapolu [26] among the U.S. Air Force Academy. The following are related with the performance of subordinates by transformational team leaders, considering the performance of subordinates in the literature review. The essential factors are:

I. Team members' effectiveness,

II. Extra effort, and

III. Satisfaction.

According to Choi et al. [20], an autocratic leader is acutely cognizance of his role and has slight or no trust in the subordinates. He perceives that compensation is merely a reward for labour and that the only thing that can catalyses people is the reward. Long et al. [30] identified six leadership styles, including:

I. Authoritative style task-oriented or structured,
II. Persuasive style,
III. Democratic style or group developer,
IV. Intellectual style or the eminent man,
V. Effective style or administrator, and
VI. Representative style or spokesman.

According to Guimerà et al. [34], if a leader is weak, inept, or has poor ethical and moral standards, the entire company suffers for the sake of that one leader. Conversely, if the leader is strong, capable, competent, and just, the organization runs well. Many of the advantages of team performance are lost because the output of the team does not benefit from the creativity and experience of all team members.

While followers may comply with the leader's request as a consequence of a transactional leadership approach, excitement and dedication to the task are not likely to arise [35]. The leader concentrates on enlisting internal actors to carry out the duties essential for the organizational goals. The transactional leader aims to guarantee that the internal actors understand the road to goal achievement, remove any potential systemic barriers, and inspire the players to reach the planned goals [36].

Laissez-faire leadership, according to Becker et al. [37], is bad, ineffectual, and leaves followers feeling very unsatisfied. Authoritarian leadership is at one extreme and laissez-faire leadership is at the other [38], with this kind of, leaders trying to delegate the duty of making decisions to the group [17].

The leader lacks confidence in his capacity to lead; hence, the group is loosely organized. Under this leadership, anybody who is willing to take the reins can make decisions [36]. There can be a lot of "buck passing," and decision-making is also quite sluggish [34]. The work might not be completed as a result, and the situation might conditionally grow chaotic [39]. When team members do not receive adequate direction or input from leaders, projects may deviate and deadlines may be missed. Comparatively, teamwork is less successful than traditional methods [40].

Although democratic leadership has been deemed the most successful, there are some possible drawbacks [41]. Unfinished initiatives and poor communication are known for democratic leadership. The attributes can occur in situations whereby time is of the essence, and responsibilities are unclear [42].

Factors that can impact the quality of a project or engineering activity in Sammya Nigeria Limited on the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun Road.

The achievement of acceptable performance standards from construction operations may be referred to as quality in the construction business. When the action satisfies or surpasses the client's need, this performance is achieved. According to Arditi and Gunaydin [43], quality is the achievement of a project's legal, aesthetic, and functional criteria. Jegun and Kothai [44] contend that project success and project quality may both be seen as satisfying client expectations. The control of the quality of the goods or services a construction business offers is one of the crucial parts of the project delivery process.

A program with two distinct components manages the quality of building projects. The Quality Assurance (QA) procedure is one, and the Quality Control (QC) program is the other. The QA element outlines the procedures the contractor will take to achieve it. In contrast, the QC element outlines how the contractor intends to manage the project's quality standards as outlined in the specifications. A product of high quality would perform better under the conditions of its usage, whereas a product of lesser quality will fail in the same circumstances, making QC crucial in the construction sector.

When QC management systems are successfully implemented, product quality may rise, craftsmanship and efficiency can be improved, wastage can be reduced, and profits can rise [45]. Another idea for controlling quality is Total Quality Management (TQM). Every organization in the sector is a part of the TQM initiative, which aims to increase performance. It pervades every part of a business and transforms quality into a strategic goal. To accomplish TQM, all employees must work together to improve performance and boost customer satisfaction continually. For any country's socioeconomic growth, especially a developing one like Nigeria, high-quality road networks are crucial [46].

A lack of quality management principles and tools may lead to frequent changes, errors, and omissions. The single most "unethical" behavior in the business, according to contractors, engineers, and the government, was delivering materials of lesser quality than the contract required, according to a 2011 World Bank report. The five most significant factors that affected construction quality in Nigeria, according to the study of Oyedele et al. [47], there were low levels of skill and labour experience, subpar materials delivered to the site, subpar inspection and testing, subpar site installation procedures, and a lack of QA.

The impact of leadership style and team performance on quality issues in Sammya Nigeria Limited on the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun Road. When it comes to quality concerns in building projects, leadership and cooperation are important. The project's leadership style is crucial, and cooperation makes it possible for individuals or groups of individuals to work together on projects. Leadership is crucial in the construction industry, as several studies have shown [48]. According to Thamhain [24], effective leadership is crucial to fostering a positive work environment for the project's participants. There is a tendency for the project manager's job to shift from one that emphasizes management to one that emphasizes leadership, as both are necessary for project leadership success. Although general leadership has been the subject of research for more than a century, Sotiriou and Wittmer [49] point out that project leadership has received relatively less attention from empirical studies.

Project managers must deal with the project's complexity, including its scale, effects on other companies, number of related partners, individuals engaged, time, cost, and uncertainty constraints, as well as any initial project result requirements. According to Crawford [50], a project manager's capacity to lead is a mix of knowledge (ability to work), knowledge (qualification), and key personality attributes (motivations, traits, and concepts) that produce excellent outcomes. The role of the project manager is developing rapidly from management or direction to leading the project with essential leadership skills and competencies.

Bad leadership and subpar teamwork are cited as the cause of low project quality. Also, it is thought that leadership style affects project quality. Based on the six leadership styles that were earlier mentioned, as identified by Long et al. [30], the survey also showed that there are only two prominent leadership philosophies in use today in the big construction companies including Sammya Nigeria Limited: the authoritarian style, also known as a task- or structure-oriented leadership, and the democratic style, often known as a person- or consideration-oriented leadership. The authoritative, task-oriented, or organized characteristics are prevalent in the majority of construction projects [35]. This is a result of the organization's structure and lines of authority. An autocratic leadership style is an authoritarian style. The decision-maker is the leader or project manager, and decisions are based on the objectives the company hopes to accomplish.

Some of the leading problems facing the building industry in recent time and in the future are highlighted by Songer et al. [51]. In the operational environment and generally, for enterprises, they highlighted new leadership problems, including sector-specific challenges. According to Toor and Ogunlana [52] research, Thailand's construction projects mostly struggle with poor project management techniques, order management, imposition, inefficient communication, and cultural challenges.

According to Turner and Müller [53], team effectiveness and leadership philosophies are frequently cited as variables that compromise project quality. According to Geoghegan and Dulewicz [54] and Crawford [50], the leadership style used in a building project affects how well it turns out. Crawford [50] said that team performance and leadership style affects the overall project quality of construction projects.

3|Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis, it was discovered that Sammya Nigeria Limited, in particular, does not always benefit from one specific leadership style. Excellent leaders can accomplish this naturally because they are aware of the situation and the followers they are in charge of. In every particular circumstance, a lot of what determines the leadership style depends on several factors, such as whether the environment is stable, conservative, or continually changing. Although no single leadership style can significantly impact team performance, transformational leaders demonstrate their faith in their followers' abilities by providing them with opportunities to make a significant impact on their work, which can lead to increased productivity, additional work, and greater satisfaction.

The skill and experience of the site staff, the base thickness, the asphalt mix, the wearing course thickness, and the quality of the materials on site are the most critical factors that can affect the quality of a project or engineering activity in Sammya Nigeria Limited on the 10.5km Osogbo-Ikirun road. Project managers must always remain on the job site to supervise the site workers on every aspect of the work until the end of working hours, technicians must test materials and inspect equipment before use, and training and retraining of construction workers are necessary to ensure quality performance of the labour force, kickbacks should be eliminated from the construction industry, and materials on the job site should be compacted adequately.

Declaration

Author contributions

OYAO: Conceptualization, Writing-original draft, Introduction, Method, Editing, Visualization; AK: Conceptualization, Writing- Discussions, Editing; NMG: Writing, Empirical, Discussions. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Data Availability

The datasets generated and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request, but cannot be made publicly available in order not to go against the declaration of confidentiality made to the participants.

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